

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Mark Hixon on November 18, 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the Claims:

In line 4 of claim 1, "the first" has been changed to ---a first---.

In line 7 of claim 2, "adsorbent" has been changed to ---absorbent---.

In line 8 of claim 2, "the desorption" has been changed to ---a desorption---.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The examiner agrees with applicant's characterization of how the instant claims distinguish over the cited prior art, which fails to disclose shifting sour gas portions contained in a natural gas from a first sour gas separation unit to a further sour gas separation unit using the recited steps. The examiner also accepts the claim and specification amendments as not containing new matter. All outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome and are withdrawn.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue

fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Frank M. Lawrence whose telephone number is 571-272-1161. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 7:30-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mike Marcheschi can be reached on 571-272-1374. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Frank M. Lawrence/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1797